

DeKalb County School District

Key Components for Implementing the PLC at
Work® Process District-wide in Year 1



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Submitted to:

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PLC at Work Coaching Academy

To include teams of five participants (50 total participants) who will lead the PLC at Work implementation in DeKalb County School District

Transferring skills and knowledge to advance the process

There is no disagreement among educators that professional isolation detrimentally affects the achievement of students. Teachers struggle with the physical separation of the classroom distancing them from their colleagues throughout each day, resulting in emotional and professional isolation. But through collaboration, “the very structure of a PLC works against the isolation of educators by demanding professional interaction...This transformation from a culture of isolation to a culture of collaboration will not occur in a school, however, without the effective leadership of the principal” (*Leaders of Learning* 62-63).

It cannot be overstated that principals make a difference in student learning, and the most powerful strategy for having a positive impact on learning is to facilitate the continued training of educators through the PLC process. Shifting the focus of principals from simply supervising individual teachers to helping build their capacity to work as members of results-oriented collaborative teams supports not only individual teachers, but the school ecosystem as a whole.

The PLC at Work Coaching Academy trains principals and teacher team leaders to apply the knowledge and skills they learn to the rest of their building-level teacher teams, advancing the PLC process and forging professional relationships among teachers and administrators that strike at the heart of the culture of isolation.

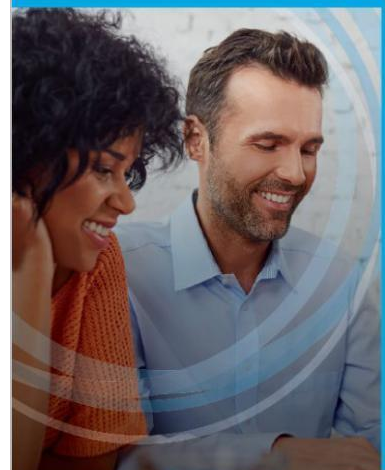
The PLC at Work Coaching Academy provides the following:

- Training for School Leadership Teams: Clear guidance and strategies are provided for implementation and ongoing support
- Learn/Practice/Reflect Cycle: The Academy is three, two-day sessions with “implementation time” built in between sessions
- Supporting Resources: Each building is provided with a “PLC Library” of books, videos, discussion guides, and reproducibles. Each participant also receives a Coaching Academy Binder

The PLC at Work Coaching Academy:

- Has been successfully used by districts, regions, and states to build and solidify PLC structures within each building
- Attending the Academy results in a trained cadre of building and district-level “PLC Implementers” who are able to support their own building and other campuses within the district.
- It is the best way to ensure a common language, shared vision, and impactful PLC practices

Structured to train teacher teams to lead the PLC at Work® process in their building, each session begins with time to reflect on the challenges and successes that occurred during the interim period and ends with an action-planning period.



The Academy is facilitated by one or more certified PLC Master Coaches, includes six days of on-site training (three sessions, two days each) and a robust selection of resources for each participant and school team, plus phone and e-mail support for the duration of the contract from the coaches. School teams will leave each session with a new set of skills and activities and an action plan for implementing and teaching what they've learned. As a result of The PLC at Work Coaching Academy, a corps of PLC leaders will act as agents of change in their own schools.

Who participates? Ideally, a team from each school in the district and representatives from the central office should participate in the Academy. Choose teams to participate who can impact change in the organization (school leadership teams - administrators must participate, preferably the principal). The participants must attend all sessions of the academy.

- One coach per 75 participants
- Teams should consist of five people

Components of the Coaching Academy:

Training: The Coaching Academy is led by a master coach who presents information, leads roundtable discussions and tabletop exercises, guides the groups in reflection activities at the end of each session, and serves as the Solution Tree liaison during the Academy training period. The training is designed to provide each participant with a working knowledge of PLC implementation and sustainability practices as well as foster basic facilitation skills within individual participants' own group-leading styles.

A PLC master coach will engage administrators and staff members in a highly interactive curriculum and participants will leave each session with a new skill set, activities and an action plan for sharing their knowledge. Individual participants and school teams will also receive a robust selection of PLC resources. The ultimate goal of the Coaching Academy is to develop the capacity for implementing and sustaining PLCs within every school in the district.

Quality of Learning: Solution Tree chooses the master coaches from a cadre of qualified associates who have succeeded with deep PLC implementation. Their experiences enable them to impart the essential facilitative and leadership skills that teams need to build capacity for creating and sustaining a PLC, which ensures high levels of student learning. Each master coach has a unique set of strengths, and every Coaching Academy is guaranteed to be of the highest caliber.

Resources: To equip participants for their schools' PLC transformation, each person will receive a selection of PLC resources to use as they lead others through the PLC implementation process. During the Academy training period, participants will be instructed in the use of each resource, with specific attention given to using the resource as a tool to teach others. Each participating team will be allowed to keep the full set of resources to use at specific school sites.

Session Two, Day Three ► Assessment

Goals for the Day

- Define the PLC at Work Vocabulary
- Make Time for Team Collaboration
- Create Essential Learnings
- Understand Common Formative Assessments

Guiding Questions

- What has become clear since we last met?
- How do we create common vocabulary?
- How do we find time for teams?
- How do we define what we want students to learn?
- What is the importance of common formative assessments?

Session Two, Day Four ► Intervention

Goals for the Day

- Use Formative Assessment to Inform and Improve Practice
- Analyze Data to Identify Students Who Have and Have Not Learned
- Make Time and Support for Intervention and Extension
- Allocate Existing Resources Differently

Guiding Questions

- What has come clear since last we met?
- What is the importance of Assessment?
- How do we know if students are learning?
- What does it look like to be results oriented?
- How do we monitor and celebrate our progress?
- What have we learned and what are we going to do about it?

Session Three, Day Five ► Leadership

Goals for the Day

- Map Progress
- Revisit Critical Issues for Teams
- Understand Shared Leadership
- Define Loose-Tight Leadership
- Rethink Hiring, Orienting, and Retaining New Staff
- Identify Practices
- Learn to Build Consensus

Guiding Questions

- What has become clear since we last met?
- What is the work of collaborative teams?
- What does our leadership structure look like?
- How do we hold everyone accountable?
- How do we make decisions in our school?

Goals for the Day

- Learn Strategies to Have Crucial Conversations and Respond to Resistance
- Understand Importance of Doing the Work Now
- Identify Celebrations
- Sustaining the Effort

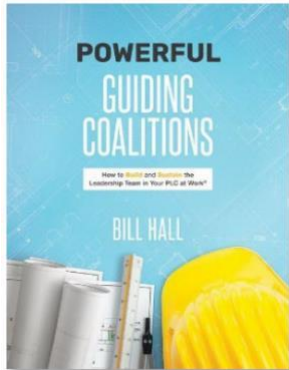
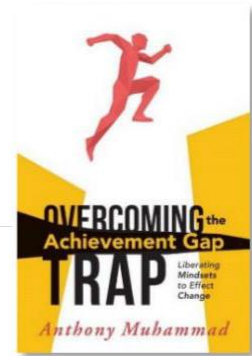
Guiding Questions

- What has come clear since last we met?
- How do we have crucial conversations?
- How do we respond to resistance?
- How do we monitor and celebrate our progress?
- Why is it important to do this work?

Accompanying Resources

Overcoming the Achievement Gap Trap: Liberating Mindsets to Effect Change

Ensure learning equality in every classroom. Investigate previous and current policies designed to help close the achievement gap. Examine predominant mindsets that contradict school missions to promote equal academic opportunities and consider the psychological impact this has on students. Explore strategies for adopting a new mindset that frees educators and students from negative academic performance expectations.



Powerful Guiding Coalitions: How to Build and Sustain the Leadership Team in Your PLC at Work

Building a professional learning community (PLC) is not a journey taken alone. That's where the guiding coalition comes in. With clear, practical guidance, this resource examines every aspect of how to create, develop, and sustain this essential leadership team. Each chapter includes next steps, FAQs, and reflections carefully designed to help you overcome common roadblocks as you move from current practice to best practice.

The Way Forward: PLC at Work and the Bright Future of Education

Teachers today have a window of opportunity to shape education in a way that will impact the profession for generations. In this compelling and comprehensive book, educator and best-selling author Anthony Muhammad explores the educational hurdles of the past in the context of present-day concerns and envisions an education system where all schools energetically embrace the PLC at Work[®] process.

